

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Fishbein and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Regina Griffin, and I live in Southbury. Today, I'm writing to support HB-6355, *An Act Concerning Risk Protection Orders*.

When I was growing up in Waterbury, a successful lawyer, the father of kids I knew, took his own life. I've never forgotten the devastation left behind.

Would having a strong ERPO have saved his life? We'll never know for sure, but the ease of a gun, its effectiveness, assured that what could have been only an attempt became a reality. A careful use of what this new ERPO law offers might have given him enough time to reconsider; to recover from his depression enough not to have chosen that route.

A few years ago, the son of a woman I worked with, a returned U.S. veteran who had served in Iraq, died by suicide in a state without an ERPO law. His parents had realized he was depressed and tried to help, but without an ERPO law, their efforts were stymied. They've established this beautiful four-acre memorial field in his honor, filled with red, white, and blue poppies.



In addition to this tragedy, my time volunteering at a women's center persuaded me that strong ERPOs absolutely save lives—not only for the victim, but for the shooter as well. They prevent families from being destroyed.

The changes suggested in this bill, such as allowing family members to request it— they who are most at risk, requiring a court hearing before any weapons are returned, and allowing it to be in effect before someone has purchased guns, only improve CT's ERPO, and will make the entire state safer.

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Regina Griffin  
Southbury, CT